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CODEL MURKOWSKI
 CINCPAC FOR CARL TAYLOR

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PREF, PREL, OREP, MOPS, US, VM
 SUBJECT: CODEL MURKOWSKI: MEETING WITH VIETNAMESE
 FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN CO THACH: JANUARY 18, 1986

1. (CONFIDENTIAL-ENTIRE TEXT.)
2. VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN CO THACH MET WITH CODEL MURKOWSKI ON JANUARY 18, 1986, AT THE STATE GUEST HOUSE IN HANOI. THE VIETNAMESE SIDE WAS COMPOSED OF THE SAME OFFICIALS AS AT THE MEETING ON THE 17TH (SEPTEL) EXCEPT FOR DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER SON WHO WAS NOT PRESENT. THACH WAS HIS USUAL CHARMING AND DISINGENUOUS SELF. THE MEETING PARALLELED, BUT WENT FURTHER THAN THE PREVIOUS DAY'S DISCUSSION WITH SON. MOST NOTABLY THACH TOOK EXCEPTION TO A VOA ACCOUNT OF A RECENT STATEMENT BY A WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN WHICH HE SAID MADE THE POW/MIA ISSUE A CONDITION FOR NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS. HE ALSO MADE A STRONG PUSH FOR THE UNITED STATES TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KAMPUCHEA ON THE M QUESTION. THE CODEL AGAIN PUSHED ITS SUGGESTION FOR THE VIETNAMESE TO SEND PEOPLE TO HAWAII TO PROFIT FROM THE CENTRAL IDENTIFICATION LABORATORIES EXPERTISE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY MIA'S. THACH WASN'T VERY INTERESTED. THACH CONFIRMED THAT THE NEXT TECHNICAL MEETING WOULD INDEED TAKE PLACE IN FEBRUARY AS HE HAD INDICATED TO THE ARMITAGE DELEGATION.
3. THACH OPENED THE MEETING BY WELCOMING THE CONGRESSION DELEGATION AND NOTING THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED OF THE PREVIOUS DAY'S TALKS WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS USEFUL. SENATOR MURKOWSKI EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR VIETNAMESE HOSPITALITY. HE TOO FOUND THE DELEGATION'S CONVERSATIONS WITH SON USEFUL AND HAD TAKEN SPECIAL NOTE OF SON'S STATEMENT THAT NO AMERICANS WERE BEING HELD IN VIETNAM FOR ANY REASON WHATSOEVER. THE UNITED STATES LOOKED FORWARD TO MORE JOINT EXCAVATION IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND TO THE LIKELIHOOD OF A TURNOVER OF REMAINS IN FEBRUARY.

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4. THACH AFFIRMED THAT THERE WERE NO LIVING MIA'S. IT WOULD SERVE NO PURPOSE TO HOLD ANY. IT WOULD BE STUPID TO DO SO. IT WAS NOT IN VIETNAM'S INTEREST AND WOULD BE AGAINST ITS HUMANITARIAN PURPOSES. VIETNAM HAD HANDED OVER THE REMAINS OF MISSING AMERICANS "FREE OF CHARGE".. THE ISSUE WAS A HUMANITARIAN ONE AND VIETNAM WOULD NOT ACCEPT ANY POLITICAL CONDITIONS BEING ATTACHED TO IT.

5. SENATOR MURKOWSKI ASKED FOR THACH'S COMMENTS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF LIVE AMERICANS IN LAOS WHICH WAS WHERE MOST OF THE LIVE SIGHTINGS COME FROM. THACH REPLIED THAT IT WASN'T IN LAOS' INTEREST TO HOLD ANY EITHER. PERHAPS THERE WERE SOME AMERICANS IN LAOS OUTSIDE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S KNOWLEDGE, BUT THE LAO WERE NOT HOLDING ANY.

6. SENATOR MURKOWSKI ASKED ABOUT THE DIED IN CAPTIVITY LIST. THACH REPLIED THAT THE VIETNAMESE KNEW WHO THEY ALL WERE. THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT HAD TOLD HANOI ABOUT THEM. THEY DIED IN THE WAR. IT IS A CLEAR SITUATION.

7. SENATOR DECONCINI: TOLD THACH THAT THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF HEARSAY INFORMATION IN THE UNITED STATES AS WELL AS PERHAPS FACTUAL INFORMATION REGARDING LIVE SIGHTINGS. THE AMERICAN PEOPLE NEEDED MORE REASSURANCE THAT THEY KNEW THE TRUE SITUATION. COULD AMERICANS COME TO VIETNAM TO FOLLOW-UP ON LIVE SIGHTING REPORTS? PERHAPS THEY COULD STAY THREE OR FOUR MONTHS, OF COURSE, WITH VIETNAM' APPROVAL. THEY WOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY, WITH VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS, TO INVESTIGATE THESE REPORTS. THACH REPLIED, IF YOU BELIEVE WE HAVE NO INTEREST IN HAVING PRISONERS WE CAN COOPERATE. IF YOU DOUBT OUR GOOD WILL WE CANNOT WORK TOGETHER. IT WOULD NOT BE IN OUR INTEREST TO ALLOW IN AMERICAN INVESTIGATORS. THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, GIVEN THE HOSTILITY OF THE UNITED STATES, WILL QUESTION WHY WE ARE DOING SO. SENATOR MURKOWSKI INTERJECTED, THAT VIETNAM HAD APPROVED JOINT EXCAVATIONS AND IT WAS NATURAL TO MOVE UP TO INVESTIGATING LIVE SIGHTINGS.

8. THACH REPLIED THAT JOINT EXCAVATIONS REQUIRED AMERICAN TECHNICAL EXPERTISE AND MACHINERY. VIETNAM DOESN'T HAVE THE MACHINERY. INVESTIGATIONS ARE DIFFERENT. IF WE HAD GOOD RELATIONS IT WOULD BE DIFFERENT. I WILL, HOWEVER, ACM

NT YOU, SENATOR DECONCINI, AND WE WILL GO TOGETHER TO LOOK. THE SENATOR ASKED IF INVESTIGATIONS BY INTER-

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NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. THACH REPLIED NO, WE CANNOT DO IT. IT WOULD BE A MULTILATERAL IMPOSITION. WE ARE INVESTIGATING LIVE SIGHTINGS OUT OF OUR OWN GOOD WILL AND DUTY. WE ARE DOING IT IN YOUR INTEREST BUT YOU STILL AREN'T GRATEFUL AND YOU DOUBT US. IF YOU GIVE INFORMATION ON MISSING FROM YOUR FOUR STATES WE WILL GO TOGETHER AND INVESTIGATE. I CAN'T DO IT FOR THE WHOLE CONGRESS, HOWEVER.

9. SENATOR MURKOWSKI THEN INFORMED THACH THAT HIS VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE WOULD HOLD HEARINGS AT THE END OF JANUARY TO DISCUSS REPORTS OF LIVE SIGHTINGS OF AMERICANS. THE COMMITTEE WOULD INVITE THE SOURCES OF THE INFORMATION TO TALK AND THEN HAVE THE ADMINISTRATION RESPOND. MR. SON HAD SAID VIETNAM WOULD INVESTIGATE ANY INFORMATION PRODUCED BY THIS PROCESS. THACH REPLIED THAT VIETNAM WOULD DO SO. HE AND THE SENATOR WOULD VISIT THE PLACES IN QUESTION TOGETHER. HE ADDED THAT THE PEOPLE

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OF THE UNITED STATES WERE SOMETIMES FOOLED BY FALSE REPORTS, FOR INSTANCE THAT OF THE TONKIN GULF INCIDENT WHICH NEVER TOOK PLACE AND WAS THE PRETEXT FOR AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT ON THE GROUND IN VIETNAM. SENATOR DECONCINI INTERJECTED THAT HE DID NOT AGREE WITH THE MINISTER'S CHARACTERIZATION OF THE INCIDENT. THE PENTAGON PAPERS REVEALED OTHERWISE. THACH REPLIED THAT NO ONE COULD MAKE VIETNAM KNEEL DOWN. AMERICANS WERE OFTEN THE VICTIM OF MISINFORMATION WHICH CONTRIBUTED TO THEIR DEFEATS IN VIETNAM. THACH NOTED THAT MOST LIVE SIGHTINGS, ACCORDING TO AMERICAN ANALYSIS, HAD BEEN SHOWN TO BE FALSE. FEWER THAN 100 WERE UNRECOVERED, BUT THESE REPORTS WERE EXPLOITED BY PEOPLE UNFRIENDLY TO VIETNAM.

10. SENATOR MURKOWSKI ASKED IF ANY REMAINS WOULD BE TURNED OVER IN FEBRUARY. THACH REPLIED THAT HE WAS HOPEFUL THAT THERE WOULD BE SOME. PERHAPS NOT ALL THE 50 CASES MENTIONED WERE RELATED TO REMAINS, HOWEVER. VIETNAM WOULD CHECK AND IF IT HAD ANY REMAINS IT WOULD TURN THEM OVER IN FEBRUARY.

11. THACH ADDED THERE IS, HOWEVER, SOME DIFFICULTY ABOUT THE FEBRUARY MEETING. WE HAD AGREED WITH ARMITAGE WHEN HE WAS HERE THAT THE MIA ISSUE WAS A HUMANITARIAN ONE, NOT CONNECTED TO POLITICAL ISSUES. A FEW DAYS LATER, HOWEVER, A WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN ANNOUNCED THAT IT WAS A CONDITION TO NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS. WE HAVE ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION, BUT HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED A REPLY.

12. SENATOR DECONCINI INTERJECTED THAT, THOUGH WE AGREED THE MIA ISSUE WAS HUMANITARIAN, IN REALITY IT HAD A POLITICAL ASPECT AS WELL AND WE MUST ACCEPT THAT FACT. THACH REPLIED, O.K., BUT IF IT IS A PRECONDITION TO NORMALIZATION, IT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTABLE. IF YOU SAY IT IS PRECONDITION WE WILL STOP OUR COOPERATION ON THIS ISSUE. IT IS A VIOLATION OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN US. WE AGREED THERE WOULD BE NO POLITICAL CONDITIONS, BUT TWO DAYS LATER THE WHITE HOUSE ISSUED THIS STATEMENT. WE ARE NOT IN A HURRY FOR NORMALIZATION. WE CAN EXIST WITHOUT IT. IT WOULD BE BETTER, NEVERTHELESS, FOR BOTH COUNTRIES IF WE HAD NORMAL RELATIONS. THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE WANT AID FROM YOU. WE ARE POOR BUT WE HAVE DIGNITY. WE ARE AGAINST PRECONDITIONS. FROM 1975 TO 1978 THE UNITED STATES HAD NO CONDITIONS ON ESTABLISHING RELATIONS. AFTER 1979 WE HAD NO CONDITIONS. NOW THE UNITED STATES HAS CONDITIONS. SENATOR DECONCINI NOTED THAT THE UNITED STATES COULD WAIT FOR NORMALIZATION TOO AND OUR PRECONDITIONS WERE IMPORTANT. THACH RESTATED THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO CONDITIONS.

13. REP. BILIRAKIS STATED THAT THACH KNEW THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WHO WERE A GENEROUS PEOPLE. IN THE STRICTEST SENSE THERE WAS NO PRECONDITION BASED ON THE MIA ISSUE, BUT WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT WAS THE REAL WORLD. IT REFLECTED THE AMERICAN PEOPLE'S ATTITUDE. WITH REAL PROGRESS ON THE MIA ISSUE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WOULD LOOK MORE POSITIVELY AT THE QUESTION OF NORMALIZING RELATIONS. THACH REPLIED, O.K., BUT IF THE WHITE HOUSE AND STATE DEPARTMENT WERE PLACING CONDITIONS, THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE WOULD ASK HIS MINISTRY WHY IT WAS NOT PUSHING THE ISSUE OF THE UNITED STATES' OBLIGATION TO HELP HEAL THE WOUNDS OF WAR IN VIETNAM. SENATOR MURKOWSKI STATED THAT WE

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SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE. THE UNITED

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STATES WAS ENCOURAGED BY VIETNAM'S AGREEMENT TO A PROGRAM OF JOIT EXCAVATIONS. WE MUST CONTINUE TO EXCHANGE VIEWS AND PURSUE PROGRESS IN AREAS IN WHICH WE AGREE.

14. THE SENATOR NOTED THAT THE DELEGATION HAD DISCUSSED THE ORDERLY DEPARTURE PROGRAM WITH MR. SON AND HAD LISTEN TO VIETNAM'S VIEWS. THE DELEGATION WAS ENCOURAGED BY VIETNAM'S WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS THE PROGRAM AND TO SEEK SOLUTIONS. IT WAS USEFUL TO EXCHANGE IDEAS.

15. SENATOR MURKOWSKI THEN TURNED TO THE SUBJECT OF "REEDUCATION" CAMP INMATES. THE UNITED STATES HAD RESPONDED TO VIETNAM'S EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO RELEASE THESE MEN. WE UNDERSTOOD NOW THAT VIETNAM WAS EXPRESSING CONCERNS. WE WOULD LIKE TO BE RESPONSIVE TO THOSE CONCERNS, BUT TO MOVE TOWARD AGREEMENT ON RELEASING THESE MEN.

16. THACH, RETURNING TO THE PRECONDITION ISSUE, SAID WE UNDERSTAND YOU. YOU MUST UNDERSTAND US. THE UNITED STATES KEEPS SAYING THIS ISSUE OF MIA'S IS HUMANITARIAN, BUT THE WHITE HOUSE RAISES IT AS A POLITICAL CONDITION. IF THIS IS THE CASE, PROGRESS ON THIS ISSUE WILL STOP. YESTERDAY YOUR AMBASSADOR IN BANGKOK TOLD US YOU CONTINUE TO RESPECT THE AGREEMENT THAT THIS IS STRICTLY A HUMANITARIAN QUESTION. WE HAVE NOT YET REPLIED TO THIS MESSAGE. IF THE QUESTION IS CLARIFIED WE WILL PROCEED. HE THEN REITERATED TO SENATOR DECONCINI THAT HE WOULD INVESTIGATE ANY CASES THE SENATOR BROUGHT TO HIS ATTENTION

17. THACH THEN TURNED TO THE "REEDUCATION" CAMP ISSUE. HE STATED THAT IN 1983 AND 1984 WE SAID WE WOULD TURN THESE PEOPLE OVER TO YOU WITH ASSURANCES. THE UNITED STATES TOLD US, HOWEVER, THAT THEY COULD NOT GIVE US GUARANTEES. THEY MUST NOT BE USED AGAINST VIETNAM AND THEY MUST NOT BE USED AGAINST OTHER COUNTRIES, SUCH AS IN LATIN AMERICA. YOU SAID THAT UNDER YOUR CONSTITUTION YOU COULD NOT GIVE SUCH A GUARANTEE. YOU COULDN'T CONTROL THEM. WE SAID IN THAT CASE WE COULDN'T RELEASE THEM. YOU SAY THEY ARE GETTING OLD. THE NAZIS ARE EVEN OLDER, BUT YOU ARE PURSUING THEM AND STILL TRYING TO PUNISH THEM.

18. SENATOR DECONCINI OBSERVED THAT THACH WAS PLACING UNACCEPTABLE CONDITIONS. THACH REPLIED THAT VIETNAM WAS NOT PLACING CONDITIONS, THE PROBLEM COULD NOT BE SOLVED. WHAT WOULD YOU DO? THE SENATOR REPLIED THAT HE WOULD LET THEM GO. THACH RIPOSTED THAT VIETNAM'S SITUATION WAS DIFFERENT. SENATOR MURKOWSKI ADDED THAT WE COULD GUARANTEE THAT ANY RELEASED CAMP INMATES WOULD BE SUBJECT TO OUR LAWS. THACH REPLIED THAT WE HAD TO HAVE AN AGREEMENT, BUT IT COULD NOT BE BASED ON AMERICAN LAW. SENATOR MURKOWSKI SAID THAT WE UNDERSTOOD VIETNAM'S SECURITY CONCERNS AND WE SHOULD SIT DOWN AND TRY TO WORK OUT A WAY TO MEET THEM.

19. THACH STATED THAT THE CAMP INMATES COULD NOT BE RELEASED TO THE UNITED STATES IN THE ABSENCE OF NORMAL RELATIONS. THE UNITED STATES HAD A HOSTILE POLICY TOWARD VIETNAM AND VIETNAM COULD NOT TURN THESE "CRIMINALS" OVER TO IT. SENATOR DECONCINI OBSERVED THAT NOW VIETNAM WAS PLACING CONDITIONS. THACH REPLIED THAT THIS WAS A POLITICAL NOT A HUMANITARIAN QUESTION. THE UNITED STATES MUST PLEDGE NOT TO USE THESE PEOPLE AGAINST VIETNAM. YOU HAVE REFUSED TO GIVE SUCH A PLEDGE, (RICHARD) CHILDRESS HAD SAID SO. JOHNSON (EAF/VLC) OBSERVED THAT WHAT THE MINISTER WAS SAYING WAS NOT TRUE. THE UNITED STATES HAD NOT REFUSED TO GIVE A PLEDGE OF THAT TYPE. THACH REITERATED THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS HOSTILE. IT REFUSED TO GUARANTEE THAT THESE PEOPLE WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO ACT IN A HOSTILE WAY TOWARD VIETNAM. JOHNSON REPLIED THAT THAT WAS NOT THE SAME THING AS GUARANTEEING THAT THE UNITED

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STATES GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT USE THEM FOR HOSTILE ACTIONS.
20. THACH STATED AGAIN THAT THE CAMP INMATES COULD NOT BE RELEASED BASED ON AMERICAN LAW. SENATOR MURKOWSKI REPLIED THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS WILLING TO PURSUE THE QUESTION WITH VIETNAM AND TRY TO FIND A SOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES. THACH THEN SAID THAT HE AND

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CHILDRESS HAD CONCLUDED THAT THE QUESTION WAS CLOSED. SENATOR MURKOWSKI NOTED THAT HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES REPRESENTED THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THEY COULD REOPEN IT. THACH REPLIED THAT WE COULD DISCUSS THE QUESTION, BUT A SOLUTION COULD NOT BE BASED ON AMERICA'S LAWS AND ITS CONSTITUTION.

21. SENATOR MURKOWSKI STATED THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN VIETNAM AND THE UNITED STATES MUST GROW ON THE BASIS OF RESPECT AND MUTUAL TRUST. THE DELEGATION HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED BY ITS VISIT TO THE HISTORY MUSEUM AND HAD A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCERNS AND MOTIVATIONS OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE. WE MUST EXPLORE AND OVERCOME OUR DIFFERENCES TOGETHER. HE ASSURED THACH OF THE UNITED STATES' WILLINGNESS TO WORK WITH VIETNAM TO RESOLVE ANY PROBLEMS BETWEEN US. THE UNITED STATES LOOKED TO VIETNAM TO RESOLVE ITS PROBLEMS WITH CAMBODIA AND CHINA. TO DO SO WOULD BE TO EVERYONE'S BENEFIT. THE REGION AND THE WORLD WOULD BE BETTER OFF AND VIETNAM WOULD BE BETTER ABLE TO MAKE PROGRESS FOR THE BETTERMENT OF ITS PEOPLE.

22. SENATOR MURKOWSKI THEN EXPRESSED HIS HOPE THAT THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT WOULD TURN OVER REMAINS AT THE FEBRUARY TECHNICAL MEETING. THACH REPLIED THAT THE SENATO WANTED VIETNAM TO SHOW KINDNESS. THERE WAS, HOWEVER, NO CONVERGENCE. MANY COUNTRIES HAD SENT AID TO VIETNAM, FOR INSTANCE FRANCE AND JAPAN, BUT NOT THE UNITED STATES. WE ARE SENSITIVE TO YOUR PEOPLE'S SUFFERING, BUT YOU ARE NOT SENSITIVE TO OURS. SENATOR DECONCINI REPLIED THAT THAT WAS NOT TRUE.

23. SENATOR MURKOWSKI SAID, YOU ASKED WHY YOU SHOULD DO SOMETHING FOR US AT THE FEBRUARY MEETING. PERHAPS WE CAN BE OF ASSISTANCE TO YOU. YOU SHOULD SEND YOUR PEOPLE TO HAWAII TO LOOK INTO THE TECHNICAL EXPERTISE AVAILABLE AT OUR CENTRAL IDENTIFICATION LABORATORY. LET US TEACH YOUR PEOPLE ABOUT OUR TECHNIQUES SO THAT THEY CAN PURSUE THE QUESTION OF THE IDENTIFICATION OF YOUR OWN MIA'S. THACH REPLIED THAT HE WOULD ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL TO ASSIST THE UNITED STATES' EFFORT. SENATOR MURKOWSKI SAID, NO, TO HELP VIETNAM'S EFFORTS. HE WOULD ASK THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO MAKE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS. THACH STATED THAT VIETNAM WAS NOW CONCENTRATING ON AMERICAN CASES. THERE WERE TOO MANY VIETNAMESE DEAD. THEY COULD NOT BE IDENTIFIED AND MANY WERE IN MASS GRAVES.

24. SENATOR MURKOWSKI ASKED THACH FOR HIS OBSERVATIONS ON THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA. THACH SAID VIETNAM WOULD B OUT BY 1990. A POLITICAL SOLUTION BEFORE 1990 WOULD BE BETTER, BUT BY 1990 THE PROBLEM WOULD BE RESOLVED. SENATOR DECONCINI ASKED IF THE UNITED NATIONS MIGHT ASSIST IN ARRIVING AT A POLITICAL SOLUTION. THACH REPLIE NO, THE UNITED NATIONS RECOGNIZED POL POT. IF, HOWEVER, IT DENOUNCED HIM, THE UNITED NATIONS COULD PLAY A ROLE. SENATOR DECONCINI ASKED WHAT FORM A SOLUTION MIGHT TAKE. THACH REPLIED THAT THERE WERE MANY PROPOSALS. IT WAS UP TO THE KHMER PEOPLE. SENATOR MURKOWSKI ASKED IF THACH

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THOUGHT A POLITICAL SOLUTION BEFORE 1990 WAS POSSIBLE. THACH REPLIED IT WOULD BE BETTER. SENATOR MURKOWSKI ASKED IF ASEAN'S PROPOSAL MIGHT BE THE BASIS OF A SOLUTION. THACH SAID ALL PROPOSALS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED. THE THAI SAY WE SHOULD OBEY THE UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION. WHY? WE SAY CHINA DIDN'T DO SO IN THE KOREAN WAR, THE UNITED STATES HASN'T, INDONESIA DIDN'T OVER EAST TIMOR. WHY SHOULD WE? SENATOR MURKOWSKI ASKED IF VIETNAM WAS READY TO DISCUSS THE CAMBODIAN QUESTION. THACH REPLIED THAT VIETNAM WELCOMED A POLITICAL SOLUTION. THE WAR HAD BEEN IMPOSED ON IT.

25. SENATOR MURKOWSKI OFFERED TO SHARE WITH THE VIETNAMESE TWO STUDIES WHICH WOULD BE COMING OUT SOON ON THE EFFECTS OF AGENT ORANGE. THACH ACCEPTED.

26. THACH THEN CONFIRMED TO THE DELEGATION THAT THE NEXT TECHNICAL MEETING WOULD TAKE PLACE IN FEBRUARY AND ASKED THEM TO PASS THE WORD TO WASHINGTON.

27. THACH THEN ASKED WHY, SINCE THE "CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT HAD SAID MANY TIMES THAT IT WOULD COOPERATE WITH THE

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UNITED STATES ON THE MIA ISSUE, THE UNITED STATES DID NOT REPLY. SENATOR DECONCINI REPLIED THAT VIETNAM OCCUPIED CAMBODIA AND WE DEALT WITH VIETNAM. THACH REPLIED THAT YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE US EITHER. WHY NOT DEAL WITH THE PRK? WHY DON'T YOU GO THERE? THEY TELL US THEY CAN IDENTIFY CRASH SITES. WHY NOT DEAL WITH THEM? THE PRK HAS SAID IT IS WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH YOU. WHY DON'T YOU COOPERATE WITH IT. SENATOR DECONCINI REPLIED THAT THE UNITED STATES COULDN'T DEAL WITH THE PRK AS LONG AS VIETNAM OCCUPIED CAMBODIA. THACH SAID NOW YOU ARE PLACING POLITICAL CONDITIONS. HE NOTED THAT REP. SOLARZ HAD GONE TO PHNOM PENH. SENATOR MURKOWSKI SUGGESTED THAT MAYBE A CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION ON MIA'S WOULD GO TO PHNOM PENH. SENATOR DECONCINI REITERATED THAT AS LONG AS 160 THOUSAND VIETNAMESE TROOPS OCCUPIED CAMBODIA WE WOULD NOT DEAL WITH THE PRK. THACH REPLIED THAT IF YOU HAVE SUCH CONDITIONS WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO WORK WITH YOU ON THE MIA ISSUE. WE BELIEVE IT IS A HUMANITARIAN ISSUE.

27. SENATOR MURKOWSKI CLOSED THE TALKS BY OBSERVING THAT THERE HAD BEEN SUBSTANTIAL ADVANCES IN OUR JOINT EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE MIA ISSUE. WE MUST WORK ON THE PROBLEMS, BUT PROGRESS IS TAKING PLACE. HE, SENATOR DECONCINI, AND REP. BILIRAKIS GAVE THACH LETTERS LISTING CASES OF PARTICULAR INTEREST. REP. BILIRAKIS EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THACH'S PERSONAL INTERVENTION IN THESE CASES.

28. THE MEETING THEN ENDED. THIS TELEGRAM HAS BEEN CLEARED BY THE CODEL.
BROWN
END OF MESSAGE

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